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CHAPTER 3

TRUST

And when the train made its return trip through Sagoro the next morning, the crew found a coffin waiting at the station, the sheriff dead, the town still burning, and armed and hooded men walking the streets.
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And Colonel Trask was just giving final instructions to one of his men.
We clear on everything, Mulchahy?
Yessir, Colonel Trask. I take care o' things here and then catch you up.
Correct. We're following the killers' trail; you should be able to follow ours. See you by sunset.
What the high holy hell's goin' on here, Ramon?
Mr. Tyler's son Billy got killed and this man, Trask, he burn down the town on Mr. Tyler's order. Tyler, he owns the railroad, the town, and he blames us for his son's death.
Well, get on the train, Ramon. We'll take you to the next town at least...
Be a short trip t'hell, Ramon. Boss says nobody from this town rides th' train.
It's maybe fifty miles to any other settlement, boy! You can't ask folks to walk all that way with nothin'! A lot of 'em will die!
Suits me. You can walk with 'em if you want, coon.

KLI-KLATCH!!
Son, I am an old black man and I just don't give a fuck any more. I just don't.
Been dealin' with assholes like you all my life and I figure t'have a bellyful. So you drop weapons and shut the hell up, hear?
Whatever you say.
Got *that* right. Ramon, tie up this bad boy and then get as many townsfolk as you can and put 'em on the train. They got a free ride t' San Antone.
Old Man Tyler'll have yore ass, coon.
I very much doubt that.
And he can *have* this job. I'd rather *starve* than take another nickel from that man after this. And you keep your tongue *civil* or I'll personally carve it out of your mouth... boy.

Night fell on the Alamo and San Antonio went to sleep. The virtuous ones in that town, anyway.
But not everyone in San Antonio was virtuous-- then or now.
Who--?!
WHAM!

Hello, Rosa. Remember me?
You kicked me in the nuts outside Sagoro.
Johnnybart. Rawhide Kid. What do *you* want?
What th' hell you *doin'* here, Rosa?
None of your damn business! What do *you* care?!
HSSSSS
Apache Kid was a *friend* of mine. Just lookin' out for you, seein' as you're his widow and all.
FSSSST
You didn't come to San Antone to try and free *Geronimo*, did you?

What if I did?!
Because that's not just *stupid*, it's *suicide*.
You that *stupid*, Rosa?
To die fighting your enemy is the mark of a *warrior!* But you will never understand that! You always make sure you have a *way out*, don't you?!
There is *nothing* for which you would give your life because, at heart, you are a *coward*, Johnnybart!
AH!

You want to be treated like a man? All right. A man calls me that, they're on the ground or under it.
If a time or situation demands my life, so be it. I'll pony up. But I won't *piss* my life away for nothin'!
You're *lookin'* to die. Problem is-- some bluecoats are just *lookin'* for a reason to kill Geronimo and the others! Odds are you'll not only get *yourself* killed but *them* along with you!
Better *death* than an Anglo prison!
You ask Geronimo about it or you just making up everybody's mind for them? You're just a slut for the grave, aren't you?
YAAAAAH!
KLI-KLATCH

I can put you in the ground if you *insist*.
Or I can take you to the Apache prisoners and you can ask them what *they* want.
You're *lying*! You can't...!
If I say I can, I can. Some of the blueberrys owe me. Can't promise we'll see Geronimo, and we can't carry any weapons in, but I can get us there.
How can I *trust* you?! You're an Anglo like *them*!
Choose. Trust me or not. We can kill each other in this alley or go talk. Pick.
I'll trust you.
For now.
Now's all we ever get.

"I'll make the arrangements after the sun comes up."
Well, Billy... you always were a little shit. Your mother loved you and, God rest her soul, I loved her. And you were my son, come what may. You were a stupid, stupid boy, but you were mine.
Mister Tyler.
Colonel Trask! This is an *unpleasant* surprise. Unless you are here to deliver the scalps of those who killed my boy, may I ask what you're *doing* in San Antonio?
Their trail leads here. The man *and* the woman. Knowing you'd come to get the body, I thought I'd tell you personal.
Bring them to me *alive*, Colonel! Or, at least, *reasonably* alive! I want to be the one that kills them!
Thought you might.
What about the porter let those townfolk ride the train? You want me to deal with him, too?
You and your boys are overpaid to beat a nigger to hell. No, no. I have people adequate to *that* task.

"IF I ask the r ght ones, they d probab y pay *me* for the privilege!"
Figger you're good as a *white man*, doncha, boy?!
KRAK!
Goona beat that notion c ean outta yore *haid!*
THAP!
Whatchew *doin'*, asshole?! This hain't none yer *bidness!*
KRAK
Adjusting the odds

KRUNK!
KROK!
KRAKKKKK!

Why did you get involved? This man means something to you?
Don't know him. Odds just offended me some
Not surprised you don't recognize me, son. Glad for th' help... though
Eustace Grimes. Don't forget someone done right by me. This done because of that?
Not direct-y.
Got a rented room. Help me to that, son, and I'll explain some things you and th' lady should *know*...
They helped Grimes to his room in the Mexican part of town and he told them what happened at Sagoro.
Thanks kindly, missy. Anyway, I remembers this Frank from them Railroad Wars. From what the folks say, he remembered you pretty good, too
Yeah. Well, we have some history, him and me
He's in town, too. Get away, son-- *pronto!* Far as you can get'
Plan to. Something needs doing first

"Made a promise to get Rosa n to see her people."
t ain t the ch ef but this is the best I can do fer ya, Johnny. When I says g t, you go fast!
I hear you Thanks, pardner
Lozen!
It was Lozen woman warrior of the Apache Legend. Sister to the famous chief Victorio, himself the son of Cochise He called her "my good right hand."
In later days, she rode with Geronimo until the end. She surrendered with him and went into exile with him. She was a great Apache warrior-- and a sister, in spirit if not in blood, to Rosa.

Little Sister!
All, Lozen! The sight of you makes my spirit soar!
This man is Johnnybart, friend to my husband-- and to me
If you say so
So, Little Sister have you also surrendered? Have you come to share our fate? It will be hard, I think
No, Lozen! I am still free and whatever it takes, I will free you and Goyathlay! I swear this
No, Little Sister it is over. The bluecoats would pursue us to the ends of the Earth Our people are tired Our day is done You are free Stay free
Free to do what, my sister? I have no purpose to my life
I can think of a thing, Little Sister. A mission for you if there is fire in you yet

(Tomorrow they take some of our children away to a far away place.)
(They say they will teach them to be white, to forget what it is to be of the people.)
(Steal them, Little Sister. Steal our children.)
(Take them high into the mountains where the skies belong to them and they can be near Father Usen.)
(Teach them our ways so we are not forgotten. Will you do this?)
(I will try, Lozen. I don't know how but... yes, I will do this.)
("Then go now. Our hearts go with you and our hopes.")
Understand the lingo some. Enough, I guess. How you planning to get those kids away?
I don't know. Yet. But I will find a way!
Well, as you said, I'm pretty good at plans. I might have one that would serve. You interested?
Tell me, Johnnybart. I am.. Interested.

The Reverend Orville Phillips was not an evil man, I think. He was a man with a clear moral vision. Much evil is done by such people.
He was one of several gathering Indian children to be taught back East in a school. Taught how to be white. For the children's benefit, they said. For the survival of the Indian. For the good of all. As the white man saw it.
From now on, you will speak *only* English, children. Do you understand? Those who do not will be punished severely. You must learn.
Rev'nd Phillips? Would y'all come this way, suh? Yo' train has been changed.
Kumph! I thought we were to take *this* train!
Nossuh Sorry, suh. This train has somethin wrong wid it. Dis way, suh. You and de children.
TAP-TAPTAP-TAPPA-TAP
TAP-TAPPA-TAPPA-TAP-TAP
RRRRR!!!P!

Well, gents, the track's clear and the train s ready to ro l Someone w l find you before too ong, I suspect.
Meantime, I got a train to steal
Keep a sharp eye out, Mulchahy The gir and the kid m ght try to take a tra n out
You see 'em, you fire a shot in the a r We l come runn ng
A r ght, children s t' Sit down, I tell you
<Rosa?!>
SHHHH.
We l be goddamned The Co one was r ght t s h m t the kid

And I got you dead to rights
BLAM!
KA-BLAM!
Get us going, Eustace! That's bound to bring us company!
ERRRRRK!

Sit down! Sit down, all of you!
But, sir, those were gunshots!
You will obey me, young sir!
You are all savages but, by the grace of God, you are going to be civilized!
KLOP!
Don't shoot him, Rosa. I have found that shooting men of God is generally unlucky. Even if they are assholes.
You are too squeamish, Johnnybart

I... I saw him, Colonel! The Rawhide Kid! Goin' to that train!
Damn!
Company comin'.
I didn't invite them.
POW!
BLAM!
KPOW!
POW!

POW!
KPOW!
UHNG!
Fall back! Get to the horses!
Well, they know we're here, a little sooner than I hoped.
This just got a whole lot tougher, Rosa.
The rails loop around some before leaving town! I want us to cut them off before they hit open country!

LET'S RIDE!
NEXT:
STRAIGHT TO HELL
THE STAGGERING CONCLUSION
OF APACHE SKIES!

ghoul